



**U.S. Department of Justice**

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**EVENT: Sentencing**

**Defendant: April Jones**

**Detroit Preparer's Skills to Deceive Lands Her in Jail for Preparing False Returns**

United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy and Maurice M. Aouate, Special Agent in Charge, Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation announced that April Jones, 35, of Detroit, Michigan, was sentenced today to 35 months in prison followed by one year supervised release. United States District Court Judge Robert H. Cleland imposed this sentence and also order Ms. Jones to cooperate with the Internal Revenue Service. On May 13, 2005, Ms. Jones was convicted by a jury in federal court on 31 counts of aiding and assisting in the preparation of false Federal income tax returns.

Evidence presented at trial showed that during 1999 through 2002, Ms. Jones gained larger refunds and minimized tax liabilities through her budding tax service for co-workers at a local auto plant and their referrals. She did this by adding fictitious job search deductions, gifts to charity, and un-reimbursed employee expenses, causing the Internal Revenue Service to suffer a tax loss of over \$70,000. In most cases, Ms. Jones failed to sign the returns as the preparer even though she was collecting a fee. At sentencing, the court determined that her relevant conduct, involving 51 additional tax returns, led to a total tax loss of over \$244,000.

Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation became aware of Ms. Jones' activities during their investigation of Maquilla Yvonne Squire, 43, of Detroit, Michigan, another local auto plant employee. During questioning, many of the taxpayers who utilized Ms. Squires' services, identified Ms. Jones as the return preparer on their subsequent tax returns. On May 11, 2004, Ms. Squire was sentenced to 27 months imprisonment as the result of pleading guilty to two counts of aiding and assisting in the preparation of false and fraudulent tax returns, after creating over \$730,000 in false deductions.

United States Attorney Murphy stated that "We take tax enforcement extremely seriously in this district. Abusive tax return preparers, such as this defendant, will always be investigated and prosecuted to the fullest extent by my office. It is important to maintain a system of voluntary tax compliance for all taxpayers and this conviction serves that goal."

Mr. Aouate stated, "abusive return preparers try and convince taxpayers that they have developed the necessary knowledge and skills to deceive the Internal Revenue Service, which is usually far from the truth."

Mr. Murphy commended the special agents of the Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation. Assistant United States Attorney Dawn N. Ison prosecuted the case.